

## **SPECIAL MEETING**

**May 13, 2014**

The Wethersfield Town Council held a meeting on Tuesday, May 13, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 505 Silas Deane Highway, Wethersfield.

Present: Councilors Hemmann, Hurley, Kotkin, Manousos, Martino, Rell, Roberts, Deputy Mayor Berry, and Chairperson Montinieri.

Also present: Michael O'Neil, Finance Director, Jeff Bridges, Town Manager and Dolores G. Sassano, Town Clerk.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Mayor Montinieri stated that Jeff Bridges is going to start with just a summary of some of the specific increases and decreases since the last public hearing that were discussed over the last several weeks.

Mr. Bridges explained that before you on the podium this evening are three documents. One is a spreadsheet showing the revenues that have been amended since the Manager's proposed budget hearing and we will go over that in a minute. The next page are expenditures which include the adjustments proposed by the council so far since the Manager's budget presentation and the third document is the motions for this evening that adopt the budget in its component parts. I would just say that the first, second and third motions are what we would call amendment motions. These are motions on behalf of the town council that amend specific portions of the Manager's budget prior to the remaining motions which effectuated adoption of the budget in its component parts. Mr. Bridges explained what we will do is by looking at the motions, we can look at modifications to the Manager's budget. So if you follow along on the spreadsheet on the screen this evening, right now are revenues. So that first motion which is just the revenues from the Manager's proposed budget, we'll go over those. Mr. Bridges stated that the tax numbers not something you vote on specifically but that's a function of the other adjustments. We've done revenues which reduce the levy for in replace of the other revenues we've accumulated. \$60,000 adjustment that's additional building permit fees that we anticipate for the upcoming year due to some larger projects that still need to pull mechanical, electrical and plumbing permits. Based upon the State budget, the Pequot funding went down from what we estimated in the budget. We are estimating \$50,000 in additional revenue sharing from the State next year. An increase of \$43,491 from the adopted budget for state-owned property. \$157 for a pilot for safe colleges and universities which we will be receiving and ECS funding the final number came in \$4789 higher than what was originally projected. Finally, based on some conversations we had through the budget workshops, the council would like to use the fund balance that we budgeted for this fiscal year, lapse it into next year to do other capital improvements so that \$300,000 of revenue is placed in next year's budget. So those adjustments to the Manager's budget are included in the first motion. Mr. Bridges asked for if there were any questions.

Mr. Bridges explained that the second motion are adjustments to the expenditures. The difference between the proposed budget and what the Council has worked on over the past

several weeks. So we start at the top. At the Town Council we had a discussion about some funding to outside agencies and based upon discussions we had we Social and Youth Services Director, there is some additional funding, Intercommunity Mental Health and North Central Region Mental Health. Kathy Bagley is recommending that we provide some funding to as requested and we've eliminated cost as membership. So the net of those three numbers is an increase of \$4641 to the Town Council's budget. For some reason, we fund those outside agencies through the Council budget. We have always done it that way, we can change it but we left it there for now. \$4,800 in the Manager's budget. That was a number we left out of the proposed budget so we are putting that back in. Probate Court is up \$500, we got their letter. We won't know what our actual levy is until they figure out where everybody stood with their grand list. Their budget went up slightly. Our number is based upon the current year number so we just put \$500 in it to make sure we had enough to cover probate court. The following two numbers Central Office services and the tax collector, those are for the postage question we had. We saw significant increases in postage so Mike O'Neil, the new Finance Director adjusted those out today. We are recommending an initial \$3,000 in Physical Services to cover some painting items in the Police Station so we have some materials to paint the interior of the Police Station. This number is not included; this adjustment for the Board of Education is not included in the second motion. That is a separate motion. The \$498,000 for the debt service, we've talked about how we weren't going to go ahead and bank debt service funds for future increases, so we've adjusted that number out. Leaving in sufficient debt service that we anticipate needing for next year. The \$300,000 of fund balance that we're lapsing, we're putting towards the capital budget as transfers to the capital budget. Finally, the Town Council also wanted to add \$300,000 to roads. That number has been put in there also. So, that's the second motion. Mr. Bridges asked if there were any questions on those.

Mayor Montinieri stated that before we go to any motions, Councilor Kotkin will summarize based on the changes since our last public hearing.

Councilor Kotkin stated that he just wants to talk a little bit about the process. He explained that the process for the council actually began really before the manager gave us his budget. A number of members of the Budget and Finance Committee including Councilor Hurley and Councilor Martino as well as the Mayor attended the Board of Education workshops, four of them which was really unprecedented to attend actually all of their workshops. We also met with the Library Board as well because those are two budgets where we approve a line item but we don't approve specific numbers with those line items so we wanted to make sure that we understood their budget well so we want to thank the Board of Education and the Library Board for ability to allow us to peer into their budget. He stated that there are a few items in here that the Town Manager just spoke about. We do have another \$300,000 that we're setting aside for roads in the budget. I think that it is recognition that we did have an awful winter. We've set aside \$100,000 out of contingency to just patch up the roads this spring, but we really need to really get behind improving our roads in town and the \$1.2 million which we've appropriated the last few years while certainly up from previous years, we just don't think it's getting the full job done so we are looking at \$1.5 million dollars including town and state money. The Town Manager mentioned earlier that \$300,000 from fund reserves that we're not anticipating spending in the current budget, that will allow us to repave the Highcrest lot, which now that we are done with Webb, is the worst parking lot in town that is owned by the town may also allow

us to do some other site work there. The Board of Education increase is \$3.2 percent which is actually a little bit below the town and certainly below the road increase. So we are reducing the Board of Education budget based on the motions that are before us by nearly \$300,000. We want to thank the Board of Education for their input along the way. It allowed the Board of Education to go forth with a couple of their key initiatives including a Security Director, a Math Curriculum Supervisor but we understand that there are also some painful reductions that they are needing to make including eliminating a number of paraprofessional jobs. Additionally, we are pleased that the Board of Education is able to use money from this year's budget to replace the Hanmer burners which there is definitely needed to ensure that next winter the Hanmer School stays warm. So I'm glad they were able to do it out of the current year's budget and it contributed to the reduction of nearly \$300,000 for next year's budget. Councilor Kotkin stated turning to the Library, a couple of things. For a fairly modest sum, we are going to be able to extend, the Library Board says with the allocation that we are going to be looking at tonight, they would be able to stay open on Sundays in June and September in addition to October through May. So that means we would be open on Sundays during the entire school year and will also allow them to accelerate replacement of some very heavily used public computers at the Library which have been breaking down a bit, much to the distress of some of our residents. Councilor Kotkin explained that this town regardless of whether republicans or the democrats are in leadership, the town recognizes its' obligations to fund future pension and retiree health benefits. I think a lot of towns in this State have not taken as responsible an approach as Wethersfield has. So one driver of the increase in spending this year is to fully fund our pension program, which we are doing based on this budget. Also last year, we put in a program to catch up and fund our very significant retiree health benefit obligations and the plan that was put into effect by the last council is being continued by this council. So, as we go out and we issue bonds to help pay for this school work, rating agencies are going to be satisfied and comforted by the fact that we don't kick the can down the road; we do meet our retirement obligations. Finally, Councilor Kotkin thanked the Board of Education, the Superintendent and his staff, and thanked Jeff Bridges and our new Finance Director, Mike O'Neil and the various department heads for really helping us through this budget. We did a full-court press, a very long Saturday and some other meetings on the budget to make sure that councilor's whether they are new or a veteran on the council understand this budget. He also thanked the Republicans on the council for making a number of suggestions that we support, some of which include not setting aside a debt service reserve this year in light of the fact that we are going through a statistical reassessment and also I want to thank them for the comments they had in support during one of our budget meetings on the Resource Officer for the middle school. If we take a look at the schools, where the Board of Education expects to add a Security Director for the school system, we expect to be able to add a Resource Officer at the middle school for the first time half way through the school year and I think the realities of life today indicate that we do have to take school security extremely seriously and address the needs. That's just sort of a summary of what we've been through the last few months and just wanted to thank everyone for the professionalism that everybody approached this budget.

Mr. Bridges stated that at this point baring any further comment, we look to have motions as provided on the docket.

Councilor Manousos ask where do these numbers compare to, remember those 18 options that

we had at the last meeting, I'm trying to follow the change. So where is Option 19, then? Mr. Bridges responded that this is Option 19 and it is a modification basically of Option 16. Option 16 as you remember had the Board of Education reduction number at \$223,500, so we increased that to \$291,000 after conversations with the Superintendent and then we tweaked the other numbers; the grant, the municipal revenue sharing number and the Town Council, Town Manager and Physical Services numbers. Those other little tweaks. So this is all basically a modification of Option 16. Councilor Manousos commented so the only difference is the reduction in the increase to the Board of Education and the additional revenue and the expense changes. Mr. Bridges commented and those smaller expense changes in Motion 2. Councilor Manousos stated so net of the \$300,000 increase that we talked about, these others are kind of new so another \$157,000/\$158,000 in additional revenue. Councilor Manousos commented that the first motion is on revenues, right. Mr. Bridges responded that the only difference from the last workshop meeting was the \$50,000. That's the only difference in revenue. Councilor Manousos asked so the pilot and the Mashantucket. Mr. Bridges responded that all those were adjusted for the options that we saw last time. Councilor Manousos commented that it still doesn't seem to make sense then and stated that that's a net of \$157,000. Councilor Manousos stated so everything except that, the municipal revenue share was in the line item #16. Mr. Bridges responded in all 18 options that you looked at before.

Mayor Montinieri commented that he wanted to move the motions in order.

### **MOTIONS FOR THE BUDGET ADOPTION**

2014 - 2015

**1. COUNCILOR ROBERTS MOVED "THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 7, 2014 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:**

	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>ACCOUNT</u>
INCREASE	\$ 60,000	41203 – BUILDING DEPT.
DECREASE	(749)	42610 - MASHANTUCKET PEQUOT GRANT
INCREASE	50,000	426xx - MUNICIPAL REVENUE SHARING
INCREASE	43,491	42501 - PILOT FOR STATE OWNED PROPERTY
INCREASE	157	42502 - OTHER STATE GRANTS
INCREASE	4,789	43001 - EDUCATION COST SHARING
INCREASE	300,000	49002 - SURPLUS PRIOR YEARS

**SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY.**

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

**2. DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY, MOVED "THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 7, 2014 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS:**

	AMOUNT	ACCOUNT
INCREASE	\$ 4,641	110 - TOWN COUNCIL
INCREASE	4,800	120 - TOWN MANAGER
INCREASE	500	170 - PROBATE
DECREASE	(3,009)	240 - TAX COLLECTOR
DECREASE	(8,600)	250 - CENTRAL OFFICE SERVICES
INCREASE	3,000	520 - PHYSICAL SERVICES
DECREASE	(498,000)	920 - DEBT SERVICE
INCREASE	300,000	950 - TRANSFER TO CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND

## **SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROBERTS.**

Councilor Rell asked the account 520 Physical Services, the \$3,000 that was the Police Station painting. Mr. Bridges responded, yes we are painting offices as we go and this is for materials. Councilor Rell asked what was the year the Police Department was completed. Mr. Bridges responded 2003 and stated that we are in the process of painting the community room and we've done some work but there is no materials budget for it. Mr. Bridges added that the Police Budget does include an extra several thousand dollars for new carpet. We are trying to keep it fresh. Councilor Rell commented 11 years old, still pretty fresh.

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

**3. COUNCILOR ROBERTS MOVED "THAT THE BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER APRIL 7, 2014 BE AND HEREBY IS AMENDED AS FOLLOWS TO DECREASE THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES BY \$291,071" SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY.**

Councilor Hemmann commented that she can't support this motion and when we discussed the 18 options, was comfortable with Option 18 as it was laid out on Thursday, so just my comments.

Councilor Hurley commented that he is in the same boat as her. I just thought that if we were going to put more money into the roads that maybe we should have cut back somewhere to help offset that tax levy that is going to happen on the people who can't afford it.

Councilor Manousos commented that when I think when we looked at this, I don't think that we have made any difficult decisions here and I think all this was just low hanging fruit. It was just through the budget process. There were natural reductions. So when you look at this reduction in the increase, this really had no pain or real in-depth analysis of the budget the way it was presented. In the first go around, there was a natural decrease in the Insurance line item, we had that twice. So in the first one, there was a reduction of \$150,000 is that right. Mr. Bridges responded \$135,000. Councilor Manousos stated so rather than taking that whole reduction and proposing the first for that round of Board of Education budget with that full reduction, there was some added back in. Mr. Bridges commented that the \$135,000 was at a meeting with the Board of Education, sorry. Councilor Manousos commented at that Board of Education whatever that reduction was at first, it wasn't fully taken, it was added back and it may be coincidental that it is

pretty close to what this additional reduction is here, so to me the optics of it make it look like there was a reduction in the increase that was significant, but I just don't see that it is. I think Councilor Hurley had mentioned it in the last meeting that there are certainly line items that warranted, I think some further reductions and I think some members of the Board of Education would probably believe that as well from the comments that I heard. So that's why I can't support this either.

Councilor Rell commented that he has a quick concern as well. The Security Director is included in this \$291,000. If I remember correctly, there was something taken out for special education transportation costs. Mayor Montinieri asked Councilor Kotkin if he recalled the amount that we did at the final meeting. Councilor Kotkin commented that his recollection is the Board of Education, when we met with them they had three different reductions that they had agreed to. Subsequent to sending us over their budget, 1) as Stathis said was the \$135,000 for the town's share of the health care costs. The number was actually bigger but some of the savings go back to the employees because they pay for up to close to 20% of our health care costs so we couldn't take the full amount because it not the town's savings. Another was that they had over budgeted for diesel fuel by about \$40,000 and the other was another \$48,000 where they are basically replacing the burners down at Hanmer out of this year's budget rather than next year's budget. So when we met with them the Superintendent said that they had more or less \$223,000 with this the \$291,000 we're basically saying to the Board of Education, we think you can go another \$68,000 beyond that. Find it somewhere out of your budget and we've been told that they should still be able to fund the Security Director even with that additional \$68,000 reduction. So, where is that going to come from? I know there was a question as to whether they had over budgeted for school transportation. I don't know if that is where the Board of Education is going to make the change or if it's going to be some other line item, but we did go back and say, not all nine of us, but I did go back and say can you live with a 3.2 percent increase in the budget. Originally, we were hoping it was going to be 3 flat. I think sitting through the budget sessions of the Board of Education, Councilor Hurley sat through a number of them, has a little different opinion tonight than the rest of us on this side do, but listening to what they were looking at, we thought a 3.2% reduction would be fair. 3% flat we thought would probably go a bit too far, but they are going to have to go back and have to adjust their budget down for the things we know about as well as another \$68,000 somewhere else. Councilor Rell commented that his concern would be that \$68,000 somewhere else if we don't have that in front of us right now makes it difficult right now to justify supporting it. Councilor Kotkin responded that the Superintendent said that he could get it done. So I want to ensure that they felt that they could manage that. Councilor Rell thanked Councilor Kotkin.

Councilor Manousos commented that my understanding was there was a meeting between the Superintendent and someone on the council and that was agreed to that it would come out of the Board of Education budget. Councilor Kotkin responded that there was a phone call. Councilor Manousos commented so is that the nature of the conversation that he said that it would come out of that line item. Councilor Kotkin responded that he didn't ask him where it would come out of. That's not our role to decide what the line items they change. Councilor Manousos asked can you tell us what the nature of the conversation was. Councilor Kotkin restated what he previously said two minutes ago. Councilor Kotkin stated that I asked if the school system could fund their programs adequately with 3.2% increase in their budget rather than, prior to the

\$68,000 it was somewhere around 3.5ish, somewhere around there. It was a pretty quick conversation. Councilor Manousos asked you were the only one that met with him. Councilor Kotkin responded it was a phone call, Stathis. Councilor Manousos commented, so just you, nobody else talked to him and there was no other conversation with anybody else privately with him. Mr. Bridges responded he called me to give me his number.

Deputy Mayor Barry commented that he does think there was a number of meetings where we looked into the line items with the budget and with the town with the Board of Education and the town and frankly, the reality was that our meeting on Thursday, the difference between items or Options 16 and 18 was very, very small, to be frank, and I think both sides of this council, I think worked hard and I don't think it was, I think hard decisions were made by both sides of the isle and I do think it is unfair to say that it was just low hanging fruit. Frankly, we were, both sides, very close in the cuts that we all talked about, so I don't see it that way.

Mayor Montinieri commented that he thinks we had again a lot of dialogue from the full council during the course of the last 90 days and that we have had several conversations with individual board members, the Superintendent. The Superintendent has talked with the Finance Chairs as well as our current staff and we also obviously had Jeff Bridges and Mike also talked. We have approached it philosophically beyond the communication and the dialogue. We have approached it with respect to the line item decisions that have been made from the original budget that was submitted back in March and then weaned since that with the thinking process that the Board of Education would guide us where those cuts were going to come as we had more conversation and we did adhere to that throughout the conversations with them and I feel like that that's something that I think we've stated in, we know it's important that the cuts themselves, where they come from, how they come, my preference has been since the beginning to look to the Board of Education to provide that direction. They have obviously stepped up since that time. So is it perfect, no, but we also understand that preserving the programs of the Board of Education was paramount in our minds and \$291,000 in cuts comes with some strain, I think frankly with my conversations with the Superintendent. That it is tight and we are trusting their judgment to get it without sacrificing any of the initiatives that I think they placed as a priority as early as March. So, we appreciate those efforts and I appreciate the counter point of view as well. I don't think we are far apart from each other, but you know obviously we hoped that everybody would get to the same point and we still feel that way.

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 5-4-0 with Councilors Hemmann, Hurley, Manousos and Rell voting NO.**

**4. DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY MOVED "THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR SCHOOL PURPOSES BE SET AT \$54,797,197 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2014" SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROBERTS.**

Mayor Montinieri commented obviously this number reflects incorporating number 3 into the final number that was originally submitted and it reflects that change.

Councilor Hurley commented that at the last meeting it didn't have to do with the budget but there was some discussion that you guys were in charge now and you get to do what you want to

do so I kind of took that you know whatever you guys put forth as the budget, that would be it. You did say that it would be bipartisan going forward but at that last meeting you kind of got a little angry and said that you know we are in charge now and we get to do what we want to do. I just kind of just wanted to mention that.

Deputy Mayor Barry commented that that conversation certainly was not discussed in the context of budget and I never heard the word that we're in charge now or anything like that. So again, I think that is an unfair statement. Councilor Hurley commented that he doesn't think it's unfair at all.

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 5-4-0 with Councilors Hemmann, Hurley, Manousos and Rell voting NO.**

Councilor Roberts asked for a roll call on that.

**5. COUNCILOR ROBERTS MOVED "THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL ADOPT THE TOWN BUDGET AS SUBMITTED BY THE TOWN MANAGER ON APRIL 7, 2014 AND AS AMENDED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL, IN THE SUM OF \$91,926,784, NOT INCLUDING STATE GRANTS OF \$8,978,092 FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT, FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2014" SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY.**

Mr. Bridges commented for some clarification. He pointed to a number on the slide (not indicated) and stated that it does not include the road number. The road number will be a separate motion.

Councilor Hemmann asked the vote that is coming from the State for the High School renovation, should that be before this number or no, it doesn't matter. Mr. Bridges responded that is doesn't matter because this number doesn't include that number. We've netted out that whole thing separate from the calculations.

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 5-4-0 with Councilors Hemmann, Hurley, Manousos and Rell voting NO.**

**6. DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY MOVED "THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE CAPITAL AND NONRECURRING ROAD FUND BE SET AT \$907,978 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2014" SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROBERTS.**

Mr. Bridges explained that the total fund would be \$1.5 million. The other portions of this are made up from State grants for capital improvement purposes.

Councilor Hemmann commented that I think this is the right thing to do for the roads. We had a very bad winter and we have really worked hard to maintain the roads with the \$1.2 million. This just bumps it up a little bit to \$1.5 million and I would like to see us keep it there so that we can do a bit more each year and try to improve. I think it's more than just staying flat. I think we need to make some progress.



Mayor Montinieri responded that he agrees with that, of course, as Jeff Kotkin pointed out, I appreciate the dialogue last week with the full council and this topic was clearly a consensus of need to put more resources into the roads, not just because the year was awful but because we obviously with revaluation, we wanted to offer something to our community to show for their tax efforts and we know we slipped a little bit on the roads. This is clearly a bipartisan supported line item and I'm pleased with that, of course. Thank you.

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

**7. COUNCILOR ROBERTS MOVED "THAT CAPITAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION PROJECT BE SET AT \$8,978,092 TO BE FUNDED FROM STATE GRANTS" SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY.**

Councilor Hurley asked if this was signed by the Governor yet. Mr. Bridges responded no. Councilor Hurley asked so how can we put it in our budget if it's not. Mr. Bridges responded that it is a stand-alone item. It's like the other grants we get. If it doesn't materialize, it doesn't materialize. It's separate and distinct. It has no impact on the mill levy and it has no impact on anything else other than the High School Project.

Mayor Montinieri commented that he has talked to the delegation about this and they have been assured and there has been a conversation that occurred between the delegation and the Governor indicating that it would be signed. If for any reason, it wasn't signed or there was some derailment that is not expected, then obviously all the options that we previously discussed for covering this gap would be reintroduced, but this is a stand-alone and protects all the other functions so I think we are good to approach it this way.

Councilor Rell commented that while I support the roughly \$9 million dollars to be included for additional funds for the high school, it is a priority of the towns and with the vote a number of years ago, the will of the public is definitely to have a renovated high school, a top notch high school. It's unfortunate though that we are at the situation where we have to ask the State for additional \$9 million dollar waiver to get the additional money. I think it's not the fault of any one board, one council, one committee, but I think it is a fault of a number of pieces just slipping through the cracks that this wasn't caught earlier and that the renovations had to include asbestos abatement, PCPs. I really wish that those that were really looking into the reconstruction of the high school had seen this earlier or had been tipped off about it earlier and budgeted it accordingly for.

Mayor Montinieri commented that just a reminder on that one point. There were several factors that I think contributed. One of which was I think we discussed this with the architect and engineers as well as the general contractor that subsequent to the engineering that was done in the submission of the estimates to the town, there were changes in the way in which asbestos and PCPs were evaluations and requirements were made which was of significantly, not the entire amount, of course, but a pretty significant factor. I'll share that just for the benefit of those that did the engineering as well.

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

**8. DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY MOVED “THAT THE TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS FOR LIBRARY PURPOSES BE SET AT \$1,876,700 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2014” SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROBERTS.**

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

**9. COUNCILOR ROBERTS MOVED “THAT THE TOTAL AMOUNT TO BE RAISED BY TAXES FOR THE TOWN, LIBRARY, SCHOOL AND CAPITAL AND NONRECURRING ROAD FUND PURPOSES COMBINED BE SET AT \$80,458,300 FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2014” SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY.**

Councilor Rell asked Mr. Bridges if he knows the amount that we took in for taxes last year compared to this \$80,458,300. Mr. Bridges responded that it should be on your revenue spreadsheet. The actual for 2013-2012 was \$73 million dollars and you’ve got to remember there is a delinquency factor of 1.35 factored into the \$80 million dollar number. Councilor Rell asked so we are anticipating roughly \$6 million dollars more in tax revenue. Mr. Bridges responded, no, less than \$5, because you look at projected 2013/14. Mr. Bridges then pointed out some of the numbers on the spreadsheet. Mr. Rell commented that the town used a tax sale, if I am not mistaken recently to boost up revenue. He commented that he thinks the State as well as the Town are going in very similar directions that we are banking on tax revenue to go up and anticipating it, I don’t know, we saw the State project a \$500 million surplus after their April 15<sup>th</sup>, their big day of trying to calculate their tax revenue. That \$500 million dollar projected surplus had gone down to a \$43 million dollar surplus. I don’t want to see Wethersfield go in that same direction where we are anticipating \$80 million and yet not getting the full amount. Mr. Bridges responded that he agrees and he would love to have a separate revenue stream other than property taxes, but in Connecticut that is not going to happen, not for local government. Councilor Rell commented it is just a concern that I have and he thanked Mr. Bridges.

Councilor Kotkin commented that he thinks that making sure that you have your revenues adequately projected is important especially when you are going to bond when you are going to sell \$43,000,000 in bonds probably over the next 4 or 5 years. If you look at the budget, you know we are expecting a collection rate on the current tax levy of 98.65 percent. In the last 10 years we have never been below 98.79 so there’s some conservatism there and in terms of prior tax collection, you can see the projection for this year is \$803,000, and the prior year was \$658,000 yet we are only budgeting \$525,000, so I think Jeff and Mike are budgeting conservatively, as they should, especially as we are about to go to market with 20-year bonds.

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 5-4-0 with Councilors Hemmann, Hurley, Manousos and Rell voting NO.**

**10. DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY MOVED “THAT THE GENERAL FUND TAX RATE ON ALL REAL AND PERSONAL TAXABLE PROPERTY BE SET AT 36.32 MILLS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2014” SECONDED BY COUNCILOR ROBERTS.**

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 5-4-0 with Councilors Hemmann, Hurley, Manousos and Rell voting NO.**

**11. COUNCILOR ROBERTS MOVED “THAT THE CAPITAL AND NON RECURRING ROADS FUND TAX RATE ON ALL REAL AND PERSONAL TAXABLE PROPERTY BE SET AT .42 MILLS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR BEGINNING JULY 1, 2014” SECONDED BY DEPUTY MAYOR BARRY.**

**ALL COUNCILORS PRESENT VOTED UNANIMOUSLY INCLUDING THE CHAIRPERSON. The motion passed 9-0-0.**

Mr. Bridges stated that the Budget has been adopted.

Mayor Montinieri commented that he wanted to thank again everybody that participated throughout this year on it. He appreciates the energy, the energy, the effort, the attendance and the discussions. He thanked everyone for their contributions.

Mr. Bridges thanked Mike O’Neil who came in at the tail end of this and really took hold of it and made an excellent contribution to the project. Linda Savitsky who has filled in for us twice as interim who has done a fantastic job. She is not here this evening, but I thank her. The entire Finance Department Staff that broke apart every number again this year and all the Department heads that took a hard look at what they needed, what they wanted and made tough decisions and made recommendations based upon what they needed to get the job done. So, I appreciate that and I appreciate the council’s consideration of those requests.

Mayor Montinieri commented that it goes without saying that you and Mike did a terrific job, very helpful. Particularly, last week the spreadsheet was very helpful for us so thank you.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

At 6:50 p.m., Councilor Kotkin moved **"TO ADJOURN THE MEETING"** seconded by Councilor Martino. All Councilors present, including the Chairperson voted AYE. The motion passed 9-0-0.

Dolores G. Sassano  
Town Clerk  
Approved by Vote of Council  
June 2, 2014